



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996

MACC-Q

17 April 2003

USCC POLICY MEMORANDUM 57-03

SUBJECT: United States Military Academy (USMA) Branching Operations

1. REFERENCES:

a. Army Regulation (AR) 351-17, *United States Military Academy and United States Military Academy Preparatory School Admissions Program*

b. AR 614-100, *Office Assignment Policies, Details and Transfers*

c. AR 614-105, *Initial Assignment of Regular Army Second Lieutenants*

d. Chief of Staff of the Army Memo, 7 Jun 1995

2. **PURPOSE:** To specify the execution of the specific six phases of USMA branching operations and to identify responsibilities of USMA agencies.

3. **APPLICABILITY:** Applies to all USMA cadets and specified USMA agencies.

4. **CONCEPT & POLICY:** A variety of USMA agencies are involved with these operations. This policy letter will address six aspects of USMA's Branching Operations policy and agency responsibilities:

a. **Phase 1, Branch Assignments/Notification:** All eligible first class cadets will be assigned a branch during the first semester of their First-Class Year. Cadets will submit preferences *via* the internet and will be assigned their branch in accordance with (IAW) their class performance rank (CPR). This process consists of several stages:

(1) **Army Accession Plan and Branching Policy Decisions:** PERSCOM develops the Army Accession Plan IAW manning policy from the Army G-1. The United States Military Academy branches officers IAW with Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) memorandum dated 7 June 1995, AR 614-105, Initial Assignment of Regular Army Second Lieutenants and annual guidance from the Army G1 on allocation of branches and branch detailing. Institutional Research and Analysis Branch (IRAB) within the Office of Policy Planning and Analysis (OPA) is responsible for obtaining final approval from the Superintendent on accessions policies for USMA graduates which are more stringent than those specifically stated in CSA guidance dated 7 June 1995.

(2) **Branch Preference Selection/Assignment:** Upon receipt of annual accession policy, the Department of Military Instruction (DMI) prepares a presentation for the United States Corps of Cadets (USCC) on the branching process. IRAB will provide each cadet with his/her CPR, Directorate of Information Management/System Engineer Branch (DOIM/SEB) will prepare a web-portal in which cadets may enter their branch/detail choices. IRAB will assign branches IAW with Superintendent approved branching guidance. IRAB will submit the results to the

Commandant and Superintendent for approval. IRAB will provide a roster of approved branch/detail assignments to DMI. Responsibilities are as follows:

- (a) DMI: Provide overall supervision.
 - (b) USCC S1: Provide OPA a list of cadets that will be interservice transfers and medical school students
 - (c) USCC Surgeon: Provide names all First-Class medical disqualifications and branch restrictions.
 - (d) Brigade Tactical Department (BTD): Verify all cadet selections IAW guidance from DMI.
 - (e) System Engineer Branch (SEB): Create/maintain branch selection website.
- (f) IRAB: Provide each cadet with his/her CPR prior to branching. Coordinate with DOIM to ensure that appropriate branch selection information is collected from each cadet. Score Alternate Flight Aptitude Standardization Test (AFAST) and provide to DMI a list of all passing cadets. Develop, maintain and run the branch assignment program IAW CSA, and Army G-1 guidance for branching. Brief the Commandant and Superintendent on branch assignments. Provide by name branch assignments to DMI.
- (3) Branch Notification Ceremony: Cadets will be informed of their assigned branch during a Branch Notification Ceremony. USMA will execute a professional Branch Notification Ceremony to inform cadets what branch they are being assigned. Responsibilities are as follows:
- (a) USCC S-3: Plan, coordinate, and execute the Branch Notification Ceremony and follow-on reception with the BTD and the Directorate of Cadet Activities (DCA).
 - (b) DMI: Organize and execute branch envelope operations in conjunction with branch representatives and Association of Graduates (AOG). This includes verification operations and letters to Medical Corps cadets, Interservice Transfers, and branch-detail cadets. Ensure branch representatives attend the Branch Notification Ceremony.
 - (c) AOG: Provide DMI the required number of brass insignia and branch notification cards.
 - (d) USCC S-1: Support envelope verification operations under the direction of the branching Officer in Charge (OIC).
- (4) Changes to Branch Assignments: There are several instances where a cadet's assigned branch may be changed after initial assignment. These are as follow:
- (a) Separations: If a branched cadet is separated from the Academy, his/her branch slot may be offered to the next cadet on the CPR. The slot will be offered if the next cadet on the CPR is not filling a floor in their assigned branch and reassignment will not violate USMA's 80/20 rule. Rebranching of cadets will be limited to offering the above-referenced cadet; readjustment of slots will not occur below that cadet on the CPR due to follow-on effects.
 - (b) Medical Disqualifications: If a cadet is medically disqualified from the branch they have been assigned, the cadet will be rebranched to the next branch on their selection that they would have qualified for at the time of branch selections. The resulting available slot will be handled IAW the procedures outlined in paragraph 4(a.) above.

(c) Requests for Rebranching: Cadet requests to have their branch changed for reasons other than those listed above shall submit a memo THRU the following officers TO the Commandant of Cadets:

- (i.) Company Tactical Officer
- (ii.) Regimental Tactical Officer
- (iii.) Brigade Tactical Officer
- (iv.) DMI Branching OIC
- (v.) Director of DMI

If approved by the Commandant, DMI and Office of Policy, Planning, and Analysis (OPA) will work with PERSCOM in an attempt to execute the branch change. Final approval authority is with PERSCOM.

b. **Phase 2, Post Assignments**: The branching OIC will coordinate with PERSCOM for post assignment slots. A post selection night will be held in which cadets will meet by branch and choose their post locations, utilizing the most current CPR to determine selection order. The following guidelines will be adhered to:

(1) Interservice Transfers and Medical School Cadets: Cadets designated as Medical Corps (medical school) and Interservice Transfers will not select a post. In the rare instance where a Medical Corps or Interservice cadet becomes ineligible for their respective program, they will be branched into the Army branch they received as a backup during branch notification. Their respective branch representative will then work with PERSCOM to coordinate a post assignment.

(2) Joint Domicile: Soldiers cannot formally enter the Army Married Couples Program until they are married. However USMA will attempt to meet the intent of the program by coordinating same-post assignments for USMA cadets marrying another USMA cadet within 30 days of graduation. During post selection night the cadet with the lower class CPR will select a post; the cadet with the higher class CPR will not select a post. Following post selection night, the respective branch representatives will work with each other and their PERSCOM counterparts to coordinate both of the officers being assigned to the post selected by the lower-ranking cadet. This policy is effective ONLY for USMA cadets marrying another USMA cadet; it does not apply to cadets marrying an officer already on active duty. Cadets engaged to an officer on active duty will pick a post on post selection night, with the obvious intention of selecting the same post as their fiancé. Under no circumstances is a post slot to be "fenced" for a cadet in this situation; cadets will select in CPR order. Cadets who are unable to select the same post as their fiancé will select a post and their respective branch representative will coordinate with PERSCOM in an attempt to facilitate a Joint Domicile Assignment. If branch representatives are unsuccessful in coordinating a joint assignment while the cadets are at USMA, the engaged couple will marry and then enter the Army Married Couples Program at Officer Basic Course (OBC) to work their assignment change.

(3) December Graduates/Graduate Assistant Coaches (GAC's): December Graduates and GAC's will select a post.

(4) Branch Detail Cadets: Cadets selected to participate in the Army Branch Detail Program will select their post with their receiver branch. A cadet who is branched Military Intelligence (MI) and is branch-detailed Infantry, for example, will be integrated into the Infantry CPR and will select their post in the same manner as non-detailed Infantry cadets. There will be no separate post selection for branch-detailed cadets.

c. **Phase 3, OBC Seat Acquisition/Assignments:** USMA will obtain the required number of OBC seats at the Basic Officer Branch Conference (BOBC). Responsibilities and procedures are as follows:

(1) **Seat Acquisition:** The USCC S1 and the DMI Branching OIC will attend the BOBC conference for USMA. Responsibilities are as follows:

(a) **USCC S-1:** Overall responsible for the acquisition of OBC seats to include briefing the results to the USMA chain of command.

(b) **DMI Branching OIC:** Attends the BOBC to assist the USCC S1 by providing accurate seat requirements through close coordination with the branch representatives.

(2) **OBC Seat Assignments:** Branch representatives will receive their OBC seats from the branching OIC. Branch representatives will solicit starting-date preferences from their cadets and utilize their branch-specific CPR to make assignments based upon these preferences.

d. **Phase 4, RFO/Orders Operations:** USMA branch representatives will make OBC assignments and submit them to the USCC S1 for entry into ATTRS. They will also coordinate with their PERSCOM counterpart for the generation of the RFO. RFO will include both OBC and post assignment. Once RFO's have been completed at the DA level, the branch representative will notify the USCC S1 that RFO's are ready for retrieval. USCC S1 will coordinate for RFO's to be produced either by the USCC S1 office or USMA AG. S1 will deliver RFO's to branch representatives who will verify RFO's for accuracy. Once verified, the RFO's will be returned to the S1 which will then generate the orders. Responsibilities as follows:

(1) **Branch Representatives:**

(a) Assign OBC's and submit results to both USCC S1 and PERSCOM.

(b) Notify USCC S1 that RFO's are ready when PERSCOM actions complete.

(c) Receive RFO's from USCC S1, verify for accuracy and return to USCC S1 for orders production.

(2) **USCC S1:**

(a) Enter OBC assignments into ATTR'S when assignments are received from the branch representatives.

(b) Coordinate for RFO printing either internal to the S1 office or through USMA AG.

(c) Deliver printed RFO's to branch representatives.

(d) Once verified by branch representatives, turn RFO's into orders and distribute through normal distribution channels.

e. **Phase 5, DA31 Operations:** All cadets will get a minimum of 30 days of non-chargeable leave following graduation. Branch representatives may extend the leave period to a maximum of 60 days from graduation based upon a cadet's OBC report date under authority granted by the Superintendent. Branch representatives will assign each cadet a report date to their schoolhouse based upon their OBC date and guidance from their respective OBC's. Branch representatives will submit a report to the USCC S1 showing the cadet's personal information (name, social

security number), the cadet's beginning and end leave dates, and any other date information required on the leave form. This includes time spent on the Hometown Recruiting Program, Permissive TDY, or assigned TDY (Airborne School, Engineer District Program, etc.). The S1 will execute all DA31 operations internal to its own office. This includes DA31 prep operations, cadet signatures, and distribution of completed leave forms to cadets. Branch representatives will not be involved in filling out DA31's, signature operations or distribution operations. USCC S1 will provide a copy to branch representatives once DA31 operations are totally complete. Responsibilities as follows:

(1) Branch Representatives: Submit spreadsheet of leave information IAW format dictated by the USCC S1. This will include the day the Second Lieutenant's leave will stop. If attending TDY school before reporting for OBC, additional leave dates will be included so that separate leave forms can be generated for the different leave periods.

(2) USCC S-1:

(a) Determine format for leave information to be supplied by the branch representatives.

(b) Once information is received from the branch representatives, execute all DA31 operations internal to own office. This includes preparation of paperwork, signatures from cadets and distribution of completed leave forms.

(c) Provide completed copy of leave form to branch representatives.

f. **Phase 6, Hometown Recruiting Program and Engineers District Program:**

(a) Hometown Recruiting Program: USMA graduates participating in the program will be assigned to a recruiting station near their home of record and become operational control (OPCON) to that station. The maximum number of days the officer can participate in the program is 14 days by regulation. This can be extended up to 20 days with permission of both USMA and USAREC/PERSCOM. The maximum number of hours they can be utilized by the recruiting station is 24 hours per week. Officer will be in a Permissive TDY status, with no TDY funding being provided by any component of the Army. USMA graduates with an OBC report date of 01 Sep and later are eligible for the program. USMA graduates with a report date of earlier than 01 Sep are not eligible for the program. Program is purely voluntary. Coordination is conducted directly between the branch representative and USAREC/PERSCOM. Hometown recruiting information must be included on the RFO, orders, and DA31. Responsibilities as follows:

(1) Branch Representatives:

(a) Coordinate directly with USAREC POC for assignment locations.

(b) Obtain permission from PERSCOM.

(c) Send consolidated information to the USCC S-1.

(d) Verify information is on RFO, orders, and DA31.

(2) USCC S-1:

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- (a) Receive information from branch representatives.
- (b) Ensure information is included in orders production.
- (c) Ensure information is included on DA31.
- (d) Coordinate Permissive TDY paperwork.

(b) Engineers District Program: Slots and TDY funding for the Engineer District Program will be coordinated by the USMA Engineer branch representative.

5. **EXPIRATION:** This Policy Memorandum will remain in effect until superseded or rescinded.

FOR THE COMMANDANT:

/s/
MICHAEL A. PHILLIPS
COL, IN
Chief of Staff, USCC

DISTRIBUTION
USCC Activities
1 each Branch Rep
DOIM/SEB
AOG
OPA